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ART. I.—*Del' arte di vedere nelle belle arte del disegno, secondo i principii di Sulzer e di Mengs. Venezia, 1798. 12mo.*

This little work is frequently put into the hands of travellers at Rome, as a good guide, in the survey of the productions of the ancient and modern arts. It is anonymous, but we believe it is the composition of Milizia, a highly approved modern writer on architecture. It inculcates the doctrines of the modern German school in matters of taste, as may be inferred from the title; and its chief fault perhaps is an affectation of originality, and misplaced emphasis of expression. The following passage will be sufficient to indicate the principles, which are inculcated in the work, and will serve, at the same time, as a suitable introduction to the remarks, which we propose to submit to the indulgence of our readers.

“The artist, who should imitate nature, such as she is, would entirely fail of his object. It is not worth so much trouble, to imitate that, which we have constantly under our eyes. The true worth of art is, to develope that, which in nature is never found united in one object. For this reason, those, who confine themselves merely to copying nature, are called *naturalists*, and whatever amount of labor they may put into their copies, they can deserve no great applause. There are occasions, when such imitation would be censurable, and the more so, the more faithful it is. Who could endure the sight of torments and monsters, if so faithfully represented as to seem real? If the Laocoon terrified us, it would cease to be a wonder

of the Fine Arts, whose object is to please, whatever be the subject, whether joyful or sad, majestic or light, tender or scornful. Terror is not delight. Accordingly eyes painted to represent nature, or of enamel or silver, as they sometimes were in ancient statues, are of ill effect; and still worse, coloring the entire statue. A fine engraving would be better than a colored statue.

‘It would appear from these principles that portraits and busts are not the legitimate object of the sculptor. If it is merely a likeness, then the merit is not great. It is a fault, if the simplicity of nature is abandoned. To have value as a work of art, it must partake of the *beau ideal*; and this may be best effected by preserving a resemblance in the countenance, making as it were the eulogy of it, and idealizing all the rest.’

We have been particularly led to the consideration of the subject of Statuary by the circumstance that within two or three years a statue of our beloved Washington, from the chisel of the most renowned living artist, has been erected in Boston. The expense of this beautiful work of art has been defrayed from contributions, collected more than twenty years since, in Massachusetts; which from the length of time necessary to the completion of such a statue, and the excellent care taken of the fund, have accumulated to a sum sufficient to defray the entire expenses of its erection. It is therefore a tribute of veneration from the individuals united in it, to the memory of the Father of his country.

This is the second work of the class, with which our country is now enriched. The legislature of North Carolina, several years ago, procured a statue of Washington from the chisel of Canova. The possession of these two works, from the two first artists of the age, is of great importance to the study and practice of sculpture in America; and, considering the great demand on the time of the surviving as of the deceased Master, it is a piece of good fortune to the country, which the lovers of art cannot too highly appreciate.

We do not propose, at this time, to enter into a comparison of the two works; nor into a detailed consideration of that most recently exhibited to the public admiration, the statue of Washington by Chantrey. Most of the judgments formed, at the present day, of either, will be likely to proceed upon the ground of likeness to the original; a ground of minor importance, and of uncertain opinion. It is only when the generation

of those who recollect the original shall have entirely passed off; and the multiplicity of different portraits shall have produced indistinctness in the prevailing conceptions of the countenance of the illustrious original, that the merits of these works can be discussed purely on principles of taste.

The occasion has, however, seemed to us a favorable one, for some general consideration of this department of fine art, as it existed in its greatest perfection, among the ancient Greeks. If we can ascertain the causes of that perfection, we can inquire with greater safety, into the probability of its revival in modern times, and what is of chief importance to us, in our own country. It is an art certainly deserving the studious attention of the man of taste, as in the highest degree beautiful and attractive in itself,—singular in its history, and in some respects endowed with advantages, over every other effort of human genius to express and immortalize itself. Books are written in languages, which become obsolete, or (to use the more expressive popular phrase) *dead*. Eloquence and poetry lose a part of their raciness, by filtration through the dictionary and grammar. Magnificent edifices have scarce ever been preserved for many ages, in their original state. Those which, like the pyramids, are built for permanence, are rarely beautiful. But the creations of statuary, from the nature of this art, are susceptible of almost perfect preservation; and in some few instances have been preserved nearly uninjured, presenting to our eyes almost the same spectacle, which they did to the eyes of those, for whom they were originally produced, two thousand years ago. The productions of this art, more exclusively than those of architecture, belong purely to taste. Architecture is by necessity, to a certain degree, a useful art, and in a climate like ours, not a little of the beauty of almost any building, must be sacrificed to its purposes of utility. A Grecian temple, for instance, without any entrance for light or air, except at the door, would poorly serve the purposes either of church or bank. But Statuary, in its highest application, is addressed purely to the taste, and like poetry, though capable of being made useful, aims in itself at another object, the refined pleasure produced by the survey of a beautiful work of art.

Many of the metaphysical writers on the subject, therefore, particularly among the Germans, are apt to interweave in their essays on subjects of art, attempts to define beauty and settle

some ultimate principles of taste. Not many have the courage to imitate Winckelmann, and admit, at the outset, that beauty cannot be defined, nor the principles of taste reduced to any ulterior foundation. It is somewhat singular, that, as men have been obliged to borrow from their corporeal senses the word, by which they designate the intellectual power, and have called the faculty, whereby we take cognizance of beauty, *taste*, they have not been more willing to allow, that the intellectual, like the bodily taste, is a final principle, and that beauty is no more susceptible of analysis than *sweet*, or *bitter*.

It is granting much to admit, that it is even as susceptible of analysis, as what are called the sensible properties of things. Though it is doubtful whether any two persons mean *precisely* the same thing, by sweet and bitter; yet there is as little doubt, that they mean nearly the same thing. Whereas that beauty is naturally the same or nearly the same to any two individuals is much more questionable. To all useful purposes, the search for its ulterior principle may be abandoned, and taste may be considered as a faculty to be formed, cultivated, improved, and perverted, and beauty as a thing to be ascertained by induction, comparison, and experience.

The art of Statuary, taking it in the elevated sense we have already indicated, may be considered a lost art in the world. We say not this, from bigotry toward the ancients; for the decline of the art may be traced in part to causes, intimately connected with the best features of modern society. But a single country only, at the present day, and we might say a single city,—Rome,—exhibits any thing like a school of Statuary, and that is avowedly founded on the study of the antique. Thither a few gifted geniuses repair to imbibe that traditionary instruction, and to behold those ancient models, which are almost exclusively confined to that spot. From the skill, which they acquire in Italy, and from the study of ancient remains, in other parts of the world, a few artists of renown have formed themselves out of Italy. Among these, the most eminent living, is Chantrey in England, who even during the life-time of Canova, was thought by many good judges of the art in England, to equal, if not to surpass, that celebrated sculptor. But Chantrey, like Canova, Thorwaldsen, and the other best artists of the day, can scarce lay claim to the character of inventive excellence, as being in their relation to the ancient sculptors, what Chatham and Burke are to the ancient orators.

The ancient sculptors, as we shall presently state more in detail, enjoyed the honorable prerogative of exhibiting in ivory and gold, in marble and in brass, the national divinities, the deified heroes, and great men, whose genius and exploits seemed to have something in them of divine. The 'human face divine' is almost the only divine thing, which modern sculptors are called to execute ; and that not as rendered truly divine by the chisel of the creative artist, but faithfully copied, with all the blemishes of humanity. Nine tenths of the commissions given to the greatest sculptors of the day, are the portraits of 'prosperous gentlemen' and ladies, curious to have their likeness, as it is called, in marble. It is plain, that a demand for such works can do little to form the powers of the artist, for great efforts of invention, or to create a school of art. A Poet, who spent the greater part of his life in composing obituary verses for a fee, would stand in somewhat the same relation to the art of poetry, that the sculptor does to the art of Statuary, whose chisel can be always commanded for a bust. In some form or other, portrait-making has taken precedence of every other kind of sculpture in modern times. The popular principles of judging, applied to any work in marble, will consequently be found to refer to a greater or less degree of historical truth and natural resemblance. Now though a fine likeness in marble of a friend or a public benefactor is a very desirable thing, which no man of sense undervalues, yet it cannot in itself be regarded, as a great effort of genius. It is evidently a mechanical affair, giving less scope to the imagination of the artist, than the planning and erection of a fine edifice. That we possess the former can hardly be considered as interfering with the doctrine, that we have lost that sublimer art, of the same name, which produced the Jupiter Olympius.

There is indeed one species of modern sculpture, which admits a pretty free exercise of inventive genius, and which has perhaps had a principal agency in preserving the art in so high a degree of excellence as it still exhibits ; and this is the monuments of great men. The characters of great public benefactors, illustrious commanders, sublime geniuses, and devoted patriots are precious in the memory of men ; and in the grateful task of immortalizing them, some of the most valuable productions of modern sculpture have had their origin. The monument of the princess of Saxe-Teschen at Vienna, (if not a little too theatrical for marble) representing a funeral proces-

sion, in which an aged pensioner, and orphan children are represented as following their benefactress to the tomb, is one of the most pleasing works of Canova. Two little infants, in one of the English cathedrals, by Chantrey, represented on their tomb, as fallen gently asleep, clasped in each others' white arms, are also of great sweetness and beauty. The two heroic statues of Washington, by the rival artists of the day, may be regarded as monuments of an elevated order. Works of this class possess a dignity, a character, and a charm as far removed from that of likeness, and the perception of resemblance, as the heart is from the senses.

We do not propose, at the present time, to pursue this topic, nor inquire how far, in a class of works of this general description, historical truth is to be studied in detail. A controversy exists on this head, but as often happens, the difference is more in the theory, than in practice. Mr. Chantrey professes to be a resolute champion of historical truth; that is to say, of the modern costume, in the statues of distinguished characters of modern times. Canova, on the other hand, pleaded for the imitation only of those parts of nature, which are pleasing, and as such contributed to the final object of the art. In the result, it will perhaps be found, that each of these masters has endeavored to avoid the literal fulfilment of his own canons of taste. The mantle of Canova's Washington and the position in the chair, particularly the latter, are strongly in modern taste; and the cloak, in which Chantrey has enveloped the hero has an exceedingly Roman *sinus*. We should, at any rate, like to see the man, who would venture into the streets, with such a 'modern costume.' Nor is this the only instance, where Mr. Chantrey has shewn, that, in defending modern costume he means a kind of sculptor's costume, devised to conceal nearly all the peculiarities of the real modern dress; which we believe, whenever it is faithfully imitated, to be, as far as it goes, fatal to the effect of the art. On the other hand, in leaving any part of General Washington's person naked, especially while he is employed in writing his valedictory address, seated in a superb chair of state, we must own, we think Canova has carried the antique to a point beyond the reach of our notions of congruity. It is not because we know General Washington did not dress so, but because such an exhibition is out of taste, and not pleasing.

No art is more eminently Grecian, than that of noble sculp-

ture. Some of the great nations, who preceded the Greeks, lavished on the arts all the resources of powerful monarchies ; but from causes partly physical and partly political, brought that of sculpture to no great excellence. The Babylonians erected their stupendous temple ; an artificial mountain of bricks ; but we have no accounts of any school of sculpture among them. On the ruins of Persepolis, are still to be seen no inconsiderable remains of a grave and solemn style of sculpture, quite equal to the earlier Grecian manner. In fact the old Persian Mardichora, as Heeren defines the monster on these ruins, bears a very tolerable comparison with the lions of the gateway of Mycenæ. The Egyptians, in the magnitude and solidity of their edifices, surpassed every thing which the Greeks attempted ; but their representations of the human form never lost the stiffness of the first essays ; the arms remained attached to the sides of the body, and the limbs stiff and inflexible. As the Greeks derived the rudiments of all their arts from the Egyptians or Phenicians, there is no difficulty in admitting, that from them also, they took their first lessons in Statuary. In fact, in adopting the national divinities of Egypt, it was scarcely possible, that the Greeks should not adopt the traditional mode of representing them. Accordingly, on the oldest Grecian coins, the figures betray an Egyptian stiffness ; and though there are no statues in existence from the age of the earliest coins, yet the older the statues are, the more they exhibit of this *immobility*.

The rudiments of Statuary in Greece have been the subject of considerable controversy, as we had occasion to state more particularly in this journal some time ago. It is a controversy, however, interesting only to the critic and the antiquary, into which we have no temptation now to enter. It respects that early period in Greece, before her civilization was mature ; when the art was little else than the imitation of Egyptian models ; and before it had begun to feel the operation of those causes, which led to its subsequent perfection. As Greece did in the art of sculpture eventually attain a perfection, in which as she had no predecessor she may be allowed to be self-taught, and in which she has been the instructress of all nations, which have succeeded her in ancient or modern times, we shall endeavor in the remainder of this article, to indicate what may be supposed to be the chief causes, contributing to the attainment of this perfection.

1. The first unquestionably is the climate of the country ; holding a middle place between the cold and unfriendly regions of the north, and the oppressive temperature of the tropics. No perfection, we believe, in any noble arts, has, in any age of the world, been attained in climates so hot, as to destroy the European complexion ; and it is perhaps equally without example, that this perfection can be reached in any very high latitude. As all the experience of the world then points to the temperate zone, as the region of high improvement in the arts of civilization, so certainly there is no country, which so truly as Greece, may be regarded as presenting the happiest mean in this temperature. With respect to the art of sculpture, the favorable influence of a genial climate is perhaps more immediate, than in the case of any of the other arts. Statues exposed to the air, in a mild climate, do not suffer ; they are neither weather-beaten by tempests, nor disjointed by frost, nor spotted with smoke. The Caryatides, which, till the recent bombardments, supported the portico of the temple of Erectheus, in the Athenian Acropolis, were, with the exception of what has been done by violent and barbarous hands, as fresh and beautiful as when first erected. The joints between the tambours, in the columns of the Parthenon, remain, for aught the weather has done, as close and almost imperceptible as ever.

But the immediate effect on the preservation of works of art is but the first of the modes, in which a genial climate promotes its progress. The same quality of climate leads to an out-doors' existence, not less propitious to the advancement of Statuary. In climates exposed to great vicissitudes, to violent heats and excessive colds, man is driven from the open face of day, to take refuge beneath roofs, and within the enclosure of walls. It is true, he can carry the works of art with him to these retreats, and in the progress of luxury, if not of refinement, this is done. The most beautiful productions of the genius and taste of the sculptor are then secluded within the recesses of palaces, and concealed in halls and galleries, which none but a favored few can approach. The Laocoon group was actually found at Rome, in an interior apartment of one of the imperial palaces, in a room without a window or a skylight, and where it was only visible by torches to courtiers. But it needs not be said, that these are not the circumstances most favorable to the

growth of the art. It is not thus, that it can first operate on the public feeling, and then by a strong reaction advance itself, under the *stimulus* of a diffusive popular taste. Nor were the brilliant works of the best age of Greece thus secluded from the public gaze. They were set up on lofty pedestals, in the market-place, the home of the news-loving Greek. The images of the heroes, to whom the ardent imaginations of their countrymen assigned the honors of an apotheosis, stood, as it were, lifted on rich columns of porphyry and marble, toward the heavens they had gone to inhabit. Rows of statesmen, orators, and generals surrounded the public squares and the forum; a memento to the busy throng beneath the character of their fathers. The friezes of the peripteral temples exhibited pompous sculptured trains of the men and the exploits, which history or tradition had commemorated. The pediments of the public buildings were filled up with imposing groups; marble statues stood aloft on the corners of the roofs, —on the very pinnacle. Pausanias assures us, that in sailing from Cape Sunium toward the Piræus, a distance of near forty miles, the mariner took for his land-mark the golden point of the spear and the glittering shield of that statue of Minerva of ivory and gold, a dazzling Colossus of thirty-nine feet in height, which Phidias had placed on the very summit of the Parthenon. If the opinion of the most learned writer on the temple of Jupiter Olympius, (Quatremère de Quincy) can be trusted, that noble temple was of the hypæthral construction; the court in which the god sat upon his gorgeous throne, was open at the top; and nothing but his own heavens was permitted to cover the head of the father of men and gods. Such, beneath a mild, transparent, exhilarating sky, were the museums and galleries of Greece. The citadel of Athens was the exhibition-room of Phidias. The clear, elastic air and bright sun did for his statues, in the broad face of day, what must be effected in our climates, in closed halls, by blinds, shutters, ground-glass, baised doors, linen curtains, and every bulwark we can command against frosts, mildews, and east winds. This unrestrained exposure, open inspection, and daily intimacy, if we may so express it, with the most admirable works of art, must have produced and nourished a sort of indigenous taste among the Greeks, which becomes a rare accomplishment in colder climates, acquired under circumstances, in which a small part only of the community is placed.

Then we must consider the general effect on man,—senses and mind,—of a genial climate. This is a subject, on which the plainest truth will seem like extravagant romance to those, who have not, in their own experience, compared a northern and a Neapolitan winter. Whoever has compared them, and felt the excitement of the ‘common sun, the air, the skies,’ in one of the favored regions of the Levant, will agree with us, that no other *stimulus*, no cordial draught, no strain of music, no cheerful conversation approaches in its effect, to the animation imparted to the frame and the feelings, by the simple agency of a fair, clear day, a soft, elastic air, and a bright sun traversing the cloudless heavens, and kindling every thing into life and joy. It is not too much to admit, that such influences must produce a somewhat different race of beings from those, who live in regions, where it is as much as skill and money can effect to keep warm in winter, and cool in summer; where, for six months of the year, hands, limbs, and muscles are rendered comparatively useless, by the quantity of flannel, fur, cloth, and leather, that must be put about them. The organization of man is not so much less exquisite, than that of a grape-vine, as that, while the quality of the wine depends not merely on the country or province, but on the very acre of ground, on which it grew, the human organization should be indifferent to climate and region. On the contrary, we believe, that the diminutive and torpid Laplander, the thick-lipped, low-browed, woolly-headed African, and the blooming child of the Caucasian race, are all ‘of one blood,’ and that subsequently operating circumstances, (and particularly climate,) acting through a long succession of ages, have produced the difference, which we now witness in appearance, character, and capacity. Now the Greeks enjoyed precisely that climate, which seems most favorable to the production of those effects, whose magnitude in a lapse of ages is so astonishing. We will not further press the consideration, how auspicious it must be to the progress of the Fine Arts. If not yet convinced, we must be, by dwelling on the opposite effects of an unfriendly climate. Does any one think it strange, that the Greenlander or the Esquimaux,—toiling in the summer for his scanty supply of rank and odious sustenance, and laying up his oil and blubber and drift wood for a dreary polar winter, which is to be almost literally slept away, without any light but that of his lamp, in a cavern covered with ice, that never melts,—has never produced a work of fine art?

Does any one think it necessary to go beyond the climate to account for his not doing it?

It is true that, in modern times, for a reason we will state, this circumstance is less decisively operative than it was in antiquity. It is, in some degree, counteracted by the highly perfected state of international communication, mentally by means of the press, and physically, by the improved state of commerce. The extraordinary facilities of communication that now exist, have done much to make the distinction of climates in modern times less important than it was formerly. Of old, refinement was local; books scarce and dear; foreign languages little known; and the human mind in one place isolated from the human mind in almost every other. Arts were invented, and after a limited prevalence, were lost; discoveries and inventions in one region required to be discovered again, and re-invented in another. While the Chaldæans and Egyptians, from their lofty towers, were observing the heavens and calculating eclipses, the Greeks and Romans gazed on them, as a disorder in the sky, and searched the entrails of bullocks, to learn what they portended. The coast of Greece, on a fair day, is in sight of that of Italy; and yet, if tradition say true, the Romans were obliged to send ten ambassadors to Athens, to learn their laws. Such was the state of mental intercourse. And as to physical communication, it is sufficient to say, that the navigation of the high seas was wholly unknown. In this state of things, all the natural differences of character between nations, were much more strongly marked, and permanent. With our art of printing, and our mariner's compass, these differences are not a little softened away. Knowledge and art, discoveries and refinements, like staple products and fruits, are transported from clime to clime, with astonishing rapidity. Causes of improvement may be local, but their operation is diffusive. As in our high latitudes, we can furnish our tables with the pine-apples, the oranges, and the grapes of warmer climates, so the most unpropitious region may enjoy a considerable participation in the benefit of the mental energy, developed in the most favored spot. Within reasonable limits, differences of climate and geographical position, which were anciently of moment, have become comparatively inoperative. The press has carried refinement into the depths of the Hercynian forest. The banks of the Elbe boast their galleries and museums, second only to those on the banks of the Tiber; and in the

dreariest corner of California the solitary Franciscan monk collects about him, in his cell, all the stores of European learning. But with all the powerful influence of the press, in breaking down some of the old partition walls of nations, it is plain that there is a certain portion of the immediate operation of a genial climate, on the Fine Arts, the want of which the press can do nothing to supply.

2°. Connected no doubt to a certain extent, in their origin, with the mild climate of the country, were certain institutions and traits of manners, the operation of which was highly favorable on several of the Fine Arts, and among others that of sculpture. We refer here to the national games and the character of the gymnastic exercises of the Greeks. The assembly at the games, from every part of Greece, stood in stead of almost every other kind of communication and intercourse. In consequence of their organization and popularity, every thing was calculated for the hearing of the ear, and the seeing of the eye. This of course,—to use a modern phraseology,—operated as a bounty on all the arts, that are connected with ocular inspection. With respect to sculpture, the fashion of the age and country associated it in the most important manner with these Panhellenian festivals. The favorite reward of the victor was the privilege of setting up his statue in the Olympian Altis.

When a great deed has been achieved in modern times, a gold medal is bestowed in a morocco case; the freedom of the city is given in a snuff box; or a vote of thanks is passed by Congress. In Greece, when a victor at the Olympic games came home to his own town, the city gates were not thought worthy to let him in; a breach in the walls was made to admit him; pompous sacrifices and games followed; and his statues adorned the market-place. Children were not left to spell out the history of their country or the exploits of their fathers, in compends and abridgments; but wherever they turned their eyes, in the hall at home, in the streets and squares abroad, it spoke to their senses; and awed and delighted them in brass and marble, twice the source of undying fame, once to the men, whose memory was thus preserved; and again to the artist, by whose genius this was effected. It is obvious, that the art, which was thus resorted to, as the last guerdon of merit, the crowning honor of genius, courage, eloquence, and success, could not but be brought to a prompt perfection.

There is another respect, in which the peculiar manners and institutions of the Greeks exercised a propitious influence on the progress of sculpture ; it was through the agency of the gymnastic exercises. These exercises were in the highest repute ; and were universally and enthusiastically cultivated. The body was regarded, not as the slave, but as the partner of the mind. It is particularly recorded of Pythagoras, (as it is even of Plato, who lived in the most fastidious age of Greece,) that he contended for the prize in wrestling. These exercises were, of course, productive of strength, health, and by necessary consequence, of beauty ; to which the Greeks paid the tribute of an admiration almost superstitious, maintaining that beauty was perfection, and in the highest sense using but one word for the fair and the good. Deeming that nature would not have exerted such wondrous skill in our organization, were it unworthy of being kept in its originally healthy and pleasing state, this ancient people gave as much attention, and pains, and time, to the exercises of the body, as to the culture of the mind. Hence, in promoting health, they promoted comeliness of form and feature. That they attained both objects, health as well as beauty, may be partly inferred from the fact, that several of the most afflictive modern diseases were unknown to the Greeks and Romans, (a circumstance considered important by Winckelmann among those, which favored the progress of the arts of design ;) while, after all allowance to be made for the flatteries of art, it is impossible to doubt, that the Grecian proportions and features were more perfect than those of any modern nation. Here, therefore, the artist was furnished with the most perfect models ; and down to the present day, the copies in marble of the young men, who wrestled and threw the discus in the Grecian gymnasium and stadium, two thousand years ago, remain the best models for the sculptor. The youthful artist, who would learn the symmetry of the human form at the present day, can pursue no such study of nature. He procures a plaster cast of an arm or of a head of some Apollo or Hercules, who, after having been buried fifteen centuries, has been dug up, shattered and mutilated, in the ruins of a Roman bath or palace. This he studies, this is his school. Such was the school of Michael Angelo. The single fragment, called the Torso, a shapeless thing, without head, arms, or legs,—nay, which the artist himself is, from certain appearances, supposed

never to have finished, is itself called the school of Michael Angelo, on account of the study which he bestowed on this one fragment of antiquity. Raphael complains in a letter still extant, that in representing the divine beauties of his Madonnas, he was obliged for want of models in nature, to copy from the ideal image in his own mind ; but it is plain to see, what has often been observed, that this ideal image, as afterwards embodied on his canvass, was borrowed from the antique.

As it was the public games, which contributed not a little to the formation of fine models of personal beauty, so the same games gave full opportunity to study these models. Sentiment varies so entirely from period to period, and in different countries at the same time, that after a lapse of ages, it sometimes becomes difficult to believe, that certain peculiarities in manners could ever have existed, which we know historically not only existed, but without any scandal or reproach. Most of the gymnastic exercises were performed with very light clothing, or none at all. The games were, nevertheless, regarded as an inoffensive spectacle ;—were performed before whatever was most grave and dignified in Greece ;—and St. Paul in his Epistles borrows his imagery and metaphorical expressions more frequently from these games, than from any other source. This then was the school of the artist ; and his subjects were not Paris plaster casts of marble images, but the living ingenuous youth of Greece. The modern artist, who would study from a living model, must content himself with such an one, as can be hired for the drawing apartment of the academy. We send out to the Canovas and Chantreys for monumental statues of our venerated hero, and expect of them to represent, in its absolute perfection, the symmetry of the human frame ; and yet so inconsistent is public sentiment, that the most effectual, almost the only adequate means of acquiring the skill to do this, is interdicted by the law of decorum ; and high-minded and honorable artists are obliged to descend to hired vagabonds, to furnish them with models of the human frame. It is plain that the art must suffer by this state of things, and the artist be degraded and humiliated by the restraints thus imposed upon him, and the progress and cultivation of his art become an ill-adjusted affair, in which an end is demanded, while the most efficient means to effect that end are in discredit.

3°. The progress of sculpture (as also of architecture) was

favoured in Greece by the abundance of fine marbles. It not only appears, that no great national school of sculpture has ever grown up in countries not provided with marble quarries ; but the progress of Statuary in Greece seems to have kept pace with the gradually extended use of marble. Wood, the oldest material of statues, and clay are too soft and perishable for an art, which aims at permanence in its very nature. For this reason, in part, among the Babylonians, whose country furnished no quarries of marble, we find no trace of an improved school of Statuary ; and if they formed images of wood and clay at a very early period, as they seem to have done, it could not be expected that works of so frail a structure should survive the stupendous piles of the same material, which have for ages been reduced to undistinguishable ruins. The Egyptians had quarries in abundance, but they were chiefly of granite and sandstone, neither of them adapted, in appearance or quality, to the finer uses of Statuary. In Greece there were inexhaustible quarries of marble, particularly the two renowned species, the Parian and the Pentelican. Of these, the marble of the island of Paros was the best, being of a finer grain and softer texture, so that it could be wrought to the most delicate imitation of the hair. The marble of Mount Pentelicus had a coarser grain and was somewhat more brittle. Its vicinity to Athens, however, was a great advantage ; and according to Winckelmann, nine tenths of the works of sculpture produced at Athens, were of Pentelican marble. It is a singular circumstance, that, notwithstanding the abundance and beauty of this stone, its use in Greece for the purposes of Statuary, dates from a comparatively late period. No certain trace of it is discovered before the age of Solon ; and even down to the time of Phidias, the practice prevailed of making the main portion of a statue of wood, and the head, hands, and feet, of marble. It was not long before a similar mode of executing statues was resorted to, from a different cause. When marble statues began to abound, something more costly and exquisite was made use of for works of the highest character. The statue of Minerva, which Phidias executed for the people of Platæa, on occasion of the victory over Mardonius, was in the elder taste,—wood, with extremities of marble. But the Minerva of the Parthenon, which was proverbial for its beautiful proportions, was of ivory and gold, and so was the Jupiter Olympius. Brass or bronze was likewise used in many works of art, and the skill of cast-

ing it reached a perfection never since attained. The cow of Myron was of classic renown ; it was standing at Athens in the time of Cicero, and is commended by him in one of his orations. In the time of Justinian it was at Rome ; but was, probably, cast into armor in the dark ages, to be hacked to pieces in the senseless squabbles of the rival factions. After the art began to wane from the full-orbed perfection of Phidias, we hear scarce any thing of ivory and gold ; and marble became almost exclusively the material of works of art, as it is, upon the whole, by far the best adapted for their various purposes.

That this is the case, we may, besides the experience of Greece, appeal to Italy. Next to Greece, Italy is the only country in which Statuary has permanently flourished ; and is, we believe, the only country except Greece, which is certainly known to possess quarries of the finest marble. The Italian sculptors of the present day prefer the marble of Carrara to the Grecian, as more easily wrought. Winckelmann assigns the Parian a preference over the marble of Carrara, in two respects, one of which he calls *mildness*, meaning, we suppose, the opposite of brittleness, the capacity of being wrought into the finest details, without springing, (a quality which he denies the Carrara to possess) and the other, the softer color of the Parian, approaching to the whiteness of a fair skin, and not dazzling white, like the Carrara. It was one of Canova's secrets in the art, to bestow upon his statues a soft waxy appearance, much more agreeable to the eye, as well as more favorable to the effect of the statue, than the shining surface of dazzling white, which is commonly seen in recent works in marble.

The quarries of Pentelicus are still of inexhaustible wealth, and are passed by the traveller on the road from Athens to Marathon. The magnificent structures at Athens, for which they furnished the material, and the thousands of statues from the same source, have made but an inconsiderable excavation on the hill side. You enter a spacious cavern, as it seems to be, and can hardly persuade yourself, that the temples of Minerva and Theseus, and the Propylæa were hewn from the spot. The surface of the cavern is coated with a thin green moss, producing a slight exterior discoloration ; and a blow from the hammer discloses in every part of it, the dazzling white stone of which the mountain consists. A living spring

of water flows through the lower part of the quarry ; and in some cases, the sides are smoked and blackened with the fires, which the Greek shepherds have kindled within this retreat, when driven by storms from the mountain's side. Were there any facilities in Attica for working the quarry, marble might still be procured to great advantage from Pentelicus, for exportation to any part of the world. There is a regular descent to the sea, both towards Athens on one side, and Marathon on the other ; and the blocks might be rolled down hill almost all the way to the Straits of Eubœa, or to the Piræus.

The United States abound in marbles of great beauty ; though, we believe, none have yet been discovered in any quantity, which equal the Italian and Grecian marbles. This may possibly, however, be owing to the imperfect search which has yet been made. The geological features of a very considerable district, and the quarries of coarse marble already wrought, leave little doubt, that our country possesses a material adapted to all the purposes of Statuary. For the other purposes to which marble was applied in Greece, we possess in our granite and sienite, a stone, that leaves us nothing to desire, either as regards the more substantial qualities or the external appearance. There is no doubt, that after standing a century in our climate, a granite edifice would appear vastly more beautiful than a similar edifice of marble. As to the coarse calcareous stone, of which St. Peter's and the Coliseum are built, it is not to be compared with our granite, any more than the Portland or Bath free stone in England.

4°. The political constitution of Greece, and the state of liberty in that country, are usually cited as another cause of the perfection to which the arts (and particularly that of Statuary) were brought among them. This element ought not to be omitted in the discussion, though perhaps not of the most determinate operation. The arts were brought to the highest perfection they ever attained in free republican Greece ; and they declined after the age of Alexander. But they revived, with a splendor inferior only to that of the classical age, in imperial Rome ; and nearly all the beautiful ancient works of Statuary, which have descended to us, are from a period subsequent to Alexander ; subsequent to the age of Grecian freedom. The greatest part of what has been done in modern times for the cultivation and improvement of these arts, has been by popes, and sovereign princes, and their nobility.

For the very perfection of any free and liberal art, there must, it is certain, be much genuine political liberty. The mind will not expand ; it will not exert its elastic power ; genius will not range heaven and earth, in the glory of its creative might, without liberty. It is not enough, that the artist himself be protected, encouraged, and paid ; he must see a prosperous, free and happy people around him, or he cannot give himself up, fearlessly and with full heart, to the inspiration within. But this is the indispensable condition only of the very highest excellence, of that last grace and perfection, which power cannot command, which industry cannot work out, which money cannot buy. All that they can—and it is much,—all that a splendid prince can order to be done and will liberally pay for,—and this is very much,—can be done under a paternal despotism.

The arts, in fact, are expensive. Marble or even granite temples, and colossal statues of marble, ivory, and gold are not to be had for a song ; and free countries—rather, free governments,—are commonly poor ; free, because they are poor. Even the great works of Athens were paid for, by a process, which would awkwardly find a place among the institutions of a free government, as understood by us. Most of them owed their existence to the tribute, which the Athenians extorted from the islands and cities in their alliance. Nor was the freedom of the Athenians themselves precisely of that quality, which we should think worth having. Was a naval expedition to be fitted out, certain individuals, possessing an estimated amount of property, were ordered each to prepare and equip, at his own expense, an armed ship for the public service, by a certain day, on penalty of outlawry. Were the walls of the city in need of repair, other rich citizens had the honor of building them up, at their own expense. The immortal oration of Demosthenes for the crown, pronounced by a competent judge, (Tully) the most exalted flight of human eloquence, grew out of the designation of Demosthenes to repair the city walls, after the disastrous battle of Cheronæa ; which he did chiefly at his own expense, and for which an honorary *crown* was voted him in the theatre, the propriety of which Æschines contested ; and hence the name.

In accordance with this view of Grecian liberty, we find that private individuals, generally speaking, were not the patrons of art ; but that almost every thing was done in the

free ages of the republic by the state; and by the princes, after freedom was subverted. In Rome, individuals were munificent patrons of the arts, but there was no freedom in Rome, in the periods in which the arts flourished; and the riches, which enabled the Luculli and the Agrippas to bestow a generous patronage on the arts, were derived from the presents of suppliant kings, the plunder of the allies, and the spoils of the enemy. Even Gallus, Virgil's sentimental friend,

— *cujus amor tantum mihi crescit in horas*
Quantum vere novo viridis se subjicit alnus,

plundered Egyptian Thebes,—*exhausit civitatem*,—to such a degree, that Augustus had to call him home,—and confiscate his property.

The effect of our own institutions on the expensive arts is a curious and important question. All that entire liberty can do will be done. But private fortunes, in consequence of the law of distributions, which is the corner-stone of the republic, will always remain small in this country. Our Governments,—both National and State,—as they raise money only by taxation, will always be held to a severe economy, in its disbursement. Nevertheless, we do not despair of doing something respectable for the arts. It is the public sentiment, we believe, that the capitol at Washington should be finished and decorated in a style becoming the metropolis of the Union; and we hope to see its superb rotunda gradually filled up with the statues of the distinguished statesmen and heroes of our annals,—an historical pantheon of liberty. The division of the country into numerous states and the contemporaneous growth of several large commercial cities, although unfavorable to that concentration of patronage and to that condensed *stimulus*, which belong to one metropolitan seat of civilization, may yet operate, by a generous rivalry. Virginia long ago procured for her capital a statue of her greatest son. North Carolina has followed the example, and enriched the country with the only specimen, which it possesses of the chisel of Canova. Is it at all probable, that no other State will imitate this example? On the contrary, we doubt if a half century elapses, before every State in the Union will have set up, as a sort of palladium, the statue of the Father of his country. So too of the example, which Boston has set, in procuring the beautiful work of Chantrey, which we have already mentioned. Will New-York, and

Philadelphia, and Baltimore allow Boston to possess a work of this kind, in the comparison with which they have nothing to exhibit? We do not believe it.

Nor do we wholly despair of what may be done, by individual fortunes. Great as the tendency of every thing among us is to the golden mean of competence, the unrivalled prosperity of our happy country is constantly throwing large accumulations of fortune into the hands of individuals in all our large towns, and throughout the country. We greatly mistake the character of the country, if the cabinet-makers and the carpet-weavers are the only artists, who are to enjoy the patronage of our rich citizens. If we are not mistaken, the age of rose-wood and carved mahogany is already passing away; as for that of *bois doré* (thank heaven) it never fairly dawned on us. We have a pleasing hope, that our young men and women of fortune are beginning to feel that, if they have money to spend in luxuries, it had better be appropriated to objects, that evince rather their own taste, than that of the upholsterer. Let this sentiment be fashionable, and the advancement of the art among us will begin.

5°. The last cause, which contributed to bring the art of Statuary to perfection, among the ancient Greeks, was its employment in the service of religion. The sculptor and the poet were in fact the authors of the popular mythology. When Phidias was asked, whence he drew his conception of the Jupiter Olympius, he repeated the lines, in which Homer describes the father of the gods, shaking Olympus with his nod. This association of Statuary with the popular faith, did for this art, what was done for the lovely and kindred art of painting, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, by enlisting it in the service of Christianity. Unhappily it is a consequence of our human weakness, that great movements of reformation are apt, in some respects, to pass to extremes. How much has not one of the sublimest arts, which human skill has ever wrought out and perfected, suffered by having its most finished and exquisite productions swept from the churches? And what good principle or good feeling has gained by it? We know none.

In ancient Greece and Rome, every temple had the image of its peculiar divinity and of numerous others,—all held by the popular faith in a veneration, which was imparted to their statues. Phidias was banished from Athens, for having wrought

his own portrait and that of his patron Pericles, into the shield of his Minerva : and the inhabitants of Elis would not permit him to put his name on any part of the Jupiter Olympius. This sanctity of the work gave dignity to the art and the artist, without doing him any real injury, even in the trifling sacrifice of self-love, (like that alluded to) which it imposed :—for what did Phidias lose of renown, by not being permitted to introduce his name on the footstool of his Jupiter ? Well was it known, throughout the Grecian world, that of all who worshiped that Jupiter, there was but one, who could have dared to fashion his awful brow.

Such was the peculiar character of the Grecian mythology, that, under the name of gods, the artist was permitted to embody the widest range of natural, or imaginative existence. No restraint was imposed on his invention, when it was taken into the service of religion. The Olympian thunderer, the goddess of wisdom, the perfect manhood of Apollo, the chaste huntress, the queen of love, gods and demigods, nymphs, fauns, muses, graces, the whole heavens of the Grecian pantheon, were to be created by the sculptor.

For the Christian world these elegant vanities have passed away ; and the art of the sculptor does not lend itself very appropriately, even to the permitted and decent ornament of our places of worship. It is not impossible, that, for this very reason, it must, in its highest perfection, continue to be a lost art. For patriotic, festive, and monumental purposes, it may still be patronised, cultivated, and carried to an elevated point of beauty. But whether it is possible for *any* art, whose basis is laid in the refined sentiments, to be sustained at the point of perfection, without an intimate association with religion, we doubt. At all events thus much is true :—the highest efforts of music, painting, architecture, statuary, poetry, have been consecrated to religion.

ART. II.—*Report of the Committee of Ways and Means, to whom was referred so much of the Message of the President, as relates to the Bank of the United States. April 13, 1830. pp. 42.*

The President of the United States cannot be justly charged with having prematurely presented the subject of the United